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INFO RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 2337

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/26/2034
TAGS: [PINR](#) [BA](#)
SUBJECT: (C/NF) SHIA OPPOSITION IN BAHRAIN (C-NE9-01290)

Classified By: SUZANNE MCCORMICK, DIR., INR/OPS. REASON: 1.4(C).

¶1. (S/NF) WASHINGTON ANALYSTS APPRECIATE PAST REPORTING ON BAHRAIN AND ARE CURRENTLY MONITORING INFORMATION RELATED TO THE SHIA OPPOSITION IN BAHRAIN, WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE POLITICAL SYSTEM. ANALYSTS WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE ANY REPORTING ON THE FOLLOWING ISSUES AND QUESTIONS, AS TIME AND RESOURCES PERMIT. MANY THANKS, AND REGARDS FROM WASHINGTON.

¶A. (S/NF) WITH THE NEXT COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES (COR) ELECTION A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AWAY, WHERE DOES WIFAQ PLAN TO GO FROM HERE? WHAT STEPS IS THE GROUP TAKING TO ADDRESS SHIA CONSTITUENTS' KEY ISSUES, SUCH AS AMENDING THE 2002 CONSTITUTION, ELECTORAL REDISTRICTING, POLITICAL NATURALIZATION, AND UNEMPLOYMENT? IS WIFAQ CONSIDERING TAKING STEPS OUTSIDE THE POLITICAL SYSTEM, SUCH AS WITHDRAWING FROM THE COR AND RESUMING COMMAND OF STREET PROTESTS?

¶B. (S/NF) WHAT IS THE VIEW OF WIFAQ AND MORE HARDLINE SHIA GROUPS, SUCH AS HAQQ, ON THE CURRENT STATE OF RELATIONS WITH KING HAMAD, PRIME MINISTER KHALIFA, CROWN PRINCE SALMAN, INTERIOR MINISTER RASHID BIN ABDALLAH, AND DIRECTOR OF BAHRAIN'S NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY KHALIFA BIN ABDALLAH?

¶C. (S/NF) WHAT IS THE WIFAQ PERCEPTION OF A POSSIBLE FUTURE RECONCILIATION OR ALLIANCE WITH HAQQ? IS THERE ANY INDICATION THAT HAQQ MIGHT MOVE TOWARD ENTERING THE POLITICAL SYSTEM? WHAT IS THE OFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP MAKEUP OF HAQQ (HOW MANY MEMBERS, PERCENTAGE OF NON-SHIA MEMBERS)?

¶D. (S/NF) HOW MANY MEMBERS BELONG TO WIFAQ? HAS THAT NUMBER GROWN OR DECREASED SINCE WIFAQ JOINED THE COR? WHAT IS THE BREAKDOWN WITHIN WIFAQ (BOTH THE SHURA COUNCIL AND THE COR MEMBERS) OF CLERICS VERSUS TECHNOCRATS? DO THEY HAVE DIFFERENT POLICY GOALS? WHAT INFLUENCE DOES BAHRAINI SHIA CLERIC ISA AHMAD QASIM HAVE OVER ALI SALMAN, THE LEADER OF WIFAQ, AND WIFAQ ITSELF?

¶E. (S/NF) WE HAVE RECENTLY SEEN REPORTING REFERING TO A NEW SHIA OPPOSITION MOVEMENT AND ITS LEADER ABD AL-WAHAB HUSAYN. HOW DEVELOPED IS THIS OPPOSITION GROUP? HAVE PEOPLE STOPPED SUPPORTING WIFAQ OR HAQQ TO BACK THIS GROUP, OR ARE THEY DRAWING FROM PREVIOUSLY INDEPENDENT BAHRAINI SHIA? WHAT ARE THIS GROUP'S GOALS AND OVERALL STRATEGY?

¶2. (U) PLEASE CITE C-NE9-01290 IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF REPORTING IN RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS.
CLINTON